

The Poor Man's Lamb

2 Samuel 12:1-25

Psalm 51

by Don Falkos

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Nathan the prophet told David a story, "There were two men – one rich, one poor. The rich man had large flocks and herds. The poor man had a single lamb that he had raised as if it were one of his own children. One day the rich man had a visitor. But he didn't kill one of his own animals. Instead, he took the poor man's lamb, killed it, and prepared it for his guest."

David was furious. "Any man who would do such a thing deserves to die!"

Nathan said to David, "You are that man! The Lord says, 'I made you king of Israel and gave you all you have. If you had asked, I would have given you even more. And yet you killed Uriah the Hittite and took his wife. You did this secretly, but I will punish you openly.' "

David confessed to Nathan, who said, "The Lord has forgiven you. You will not die, but your son will."

The son of David and Bathsheba became deathly ill. For seven days David fasted, wept, and begged God to spare the child. "Cleanse me from my sin. Wash me and I will be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

When the child died, David bathed, changed his clothes, and worshipped the Lord. David's advisers didn't understand his behavior. He told them, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept thinking, 'The Lord may yet let him live.' But now that he's dead, why should I fast? I can't bring him back. I will go to him one day, but he will not return to me."

Later David and Bathsheba had another son, and they named him Solomon.